WHRC to hit airwaves

Delaware Valley's 'first voice' grows up

by Frank Perch

WHRC, Delaware Valley's "first radio voice," has not been heard outside the Haverford Dining Center this year. According to Station Director Matthew Mirapaul, "burgeoning technical problems" have caused the delay in getting on the air. However, he foresees an end to the technical difficulties in the very near future, and promises that WHRC will soon return to the bi-College airwaves with several new features and programs to offer.

Mirapaul explained that WHRC is currently designed to operate by a carrier current system. In this system, the signal travels through telephone lines to Haverford and Bryn Mawr dorms, where transmitters shift the signal to the electrical system, so that any radio in the dorm can receive WHRC at 640 AM. According to Mirapaul, problems existed in both the studio end of the system and in the phone lines. However, he remarked "Within a week the station should be on the air."

Mirapaul envisions a fully operating WHRC as an active bi-College medium of information, communication, and entertainment. In a statement accompanying WHRC's request for SC/SGA funding, he says, "A technically functioning station can and will have the same kind of campus-wide effect as, say, The News does now." In the past, he stated, WHRC's programming has included away basketball games, live theatre, comedy and interview shows, and "every conceivable type of music." Mirapaul refused to comment extensively on the programs planed when WHRC's carrier current again becomes operative, but he did state that regular news and sports programs are definitely among the new features to be broadcast.

No Pressure

At the same time, Mirapaul emphasized the special advantage that non-commercial stations like WHRC have in broadcasting music. He noted that a much wider variety of music can be heard on WHRC than on most AM stations, because WHRC disc jockeys "are not pressured by record companies" to play only "hit" music.

Dave Mendez

Disc jockey Mike Fendrich broadcasts over Haverford airwaves.

Another important function of WHRC, according to Mirapaul, is the experience the station gives to its own staff. The WHRC statement of objectives, in the SC/SGA budget request, includes the goals "to provide an education for our staff in the creative and musical arts, and to act as a creative outlet for them that they are unable to get elsewhere on campus."

Mirapaul elaborated on this statement, mentioning that WHRC not only gives students experience in the technical end of broadcasting, but also gives students the chance to learn more about popular music that they would not ordinarily be exposed to.

Veteran Gone Pro

At least one former Haverfordian has profited from experience at WHRC. Steve Bronstein '75 now works at WCAU as Assistant Producer of the Tom Brookshier Show and as Film and Viedotape Coordinator. Bronstein, who was Station Director at WHRC from 1973 through 1975, stated his experience at WHRC was "definitely helpful; it gave me a chance to work creatively with the media."

While at WHRC, Bronstein worked experimentally with special productions such as documentaries, drama, advertisements and station breaks, and comedy, including the 1973 April Fool Show, which he described as "a high-class Class Night."

A frequently discussed possibility for the future of WHRC is the proposal to convert the station to a full-fledged FM broadcasting station. Both Mirapaul and Program Director Ken Nachbar emphasize, however, that going FM is unlikely at best, at least for the near future. Mirapaul states that conversion to FM presents many problems, "especially financial ones," and the entire process takes two or three years, at a minimum, to complete—and that's after SGA/SC make a commitment they're not even close to taking."

Nachbar stated that a committee has been formed to study the matter, and it is scheduled to make a final decision this year. However, Mirapaul stressed that the important concern for WHRC now is to become a fully functioning, reliable carrier current station, so that it will have a strong technical and personnel foundation should the move to FM ever be made.